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SHINING TIME STATION  
Show 17--First Draft  
Ellis Weiner

FADE IN

1 MAIN SET--PAN SLOWLY, starting from Ticket Booth: MR C stands on ledge, reading off clipboard, instructing MATT and TANYA to change numbers and names on Arrival and Departure Board, which leans against booth

MR C  
That's right--the 6:23 to Weston is now the 6:55 to Celery Patch.

TANYA  
Mr. Conductor--what about the 6:45 to Sherman's Mill?

MR C  
Oh, dear...it's not listed. Just put a question mark.

where?  
where?

PAN TO

BENCHES: where one or two PASSENGERS look impatiently at the watches and convey irritation.

PAN TO

PLATFORM ARCH: where a PASSENGER comes in and makes a gesture of annoyance to those on benches

PAN TO

ARCADE: where another passenger peers gloomily at the juke box, then looks at this watch

END PAN ON

STAGE LEFT (WORKSHOP? LOST AND FOUND?): HARRY AND STACY are in conference. They must keep their voices down, let the passengers hear

STACY

It's outrageous. They told us those repairs would be done in three days.

*The job was supposed to be done in three days.  
It's been two weeks! already and they still say  
they need 3 more days.*

HARRY

It's a string of bad luck. First we had all that rain, washed out those trestles. Then they find sections of track rusting away. It takes time to fix things like that.

STACY

I know, Harry. But they give us a new schedule practically every day. They cancel a train one day, and make it a main connection the next! People can't make plans. They don't know what to believe.

HARRY

Repair crews are doing the best they can.

STACY

Of course. It's not their fault. The problem is the main office. They don't seem to remember that a schedule is like a promise. If you promise to be here at 7:33 in the morning, we promise you can get on the northbound express to Pinkytown. And a promise is a promise, whether it's made by a person or a railroad.

good  
idea

HARRY

Now in theory that's true. But you have to remember what you're dealing with here. We're talking about big machines, big railroad cars, lots of people, the weather-- *lots of things that can go wrong* *or cause problems*

STACY

(smiles; concedes it)

You're right. But my granny used to talk about how proud railroad people were about meeting their timetables. She used to say, "A train that doesn't run on time isn't ~~much~~ better than a broken clock. It just makes more noise."

HARRY shrugs.

AT TICKET BOOTH: MR C now holds three or four sheets at once, trying to figure out the complex of changes.

MR C

Now just a moment...

(riffles through sheets)

Didn't we say that the 10:15 to Bartlett doesn't run on weekends?

MATT

(at board; points)

That's right. Here it is.

MR C

Well this sheet now says it only  
runs on weekends.  
(sighs)  
I give up!

HE tosses the sheets into the air, and--

THEY (on the cut) turn into BALLOONS, which drift up toward  
the ceiling

MATT

Wow!

TANYA *Dash through the schedule away*  
Hey, wait! We're not finished  
with the holiday schedule!

MR C

You're right, Tanya Lasagna. My  
mistake.

HE holds his hand up, and the footage is reversed: balloons  
fall back down, and on the cut turn into sheets of paper,  
which funnel down into his hand

MR C

Now, where were we? "On Fridays,  
Saturdays, and Sundays, all Expresses  
will run Local on the Express track."

HE reacts, then flings his hand up with the sheets, as  
though to throw them up again. But he holds onto them--and  
at the apex of the gesture, they turn into a bouquet of  
flowers. He extends this toward Tanya. She takes it.

MR C

For you. Maybe you can make more  
sense of it than I can.

Now free of the sheets, he sits on ledge and gets comfy.

MR C

I don't mean to be cheeky. I know  
everyone is doing their best to make the  
repairs and get things back to normal.

MATT

Do they have these problems *on the*  
*Island of Sodor?*

MR C

I should say so. Why, a *few weeks ago*,  
it seemed that everybody was late all  
the time--

*- dash fire*  
*set a time*

HE BLOWS WHISTLE--

DISSOLVE TO

2 THOMAS EPISODE #41--"BETTER LATE THAN NEVER"

DISSOLVE TO

3 MAIN SET--MR C and KIDS at Ticket Booth

MR C

Unfortunately, wherever you have time-tables, you're going to have lateness. The trick is to learn to put up with it, and not blow your boilers.

adapt with it  
"go with the  
flow"  
bed in the wind

ANGLE ON WORKSHOP--STACY leans out the door. INTERCUT with kids and Mr. C

STACY

Excuse me--could everybody come here, please?

MR C

Does "everybody" mean everybody, Stacy?

STACY

Well, not everybody on earth, no.  
(off his crestfallen take)  
But it sure means you, too, Mr. Conductor. If you'd like.

MR C

I should be delighted.  
(to kids)  
Shall we?

THEY start to reply, but MR C disappears--

CUT TO

4 INT. HARRY'S WORKSHOP--HARRY is putting finishing touches on revision of last episode's map

Conned  
on his  
disagreement

HARRY

And this becomes local for the one after nine-oh-nine.

?)

MR C. reappears with a pop. HARRY looks up warily. Kids enter with Stacy

HARRY

I wish you'd warn me when you're going to do that. It gives me the willies.

MR C  
Sorry, Harry. I'll try to remember.  
(re map on desk)  
Here, you've changed the map.

STACY  
(holds up map)  
That's what I wanted to show you. Harry and I think we've figured out a way to re-route the main lines so that nobody has to be late. Plus we think it'll bring more business to the station.

MATT  
How can you do that?

HARRY  
It's tricky. Has to do with freight lines and sidings nobody uses. But I think she'll work.

STACY  
So we want to go the main office, and show it to the owner of the line.

TANYA  
Can we come too?

STACY  
That's the problem, Tanya. I don't think so. But we can't leave you two minding the station alone here...

MR C looks rather proud of himself

MR C  
They wouldn't be alone. I can manage the station quite well, thank you.

HARRY  
(gruff, but not mean)  
You?! What are you gonna do--fly around and pop up in people's faces? Scare everyone to death?

MR C  
The only one who gets scared is you.

STACY  
I don't know, Mr. Conductor. If you ran the station...how would you talk into the telephone?

MR C  
Very loudly. I can shout, you know.

he has already  
done this  
in front of Harry

HARRY

Suppose somebody had three or four real big pieces of luggage. How would you help carry 'em to the platform?

MR C

I wouldn't even try. I'd tell that person not to travel with so much. I never do. The most I ever carry on a trip is an extra handkerchief.

STACY

Well, thanks anyway, Mr. Conductor. But I think we need a regular-sized person to watch the kids and run the station. Otherwise, I don't think we can go.

SCHEMER (OS.)

Do I hear a cry for help?

MR C

I wondered where he was today/  
Excuse me while I slip away.

HE disappears

ANGLE ON WORKSHOP DOORWAY: SCHEMER appears, enters

SCHEMER

Miss Jones, did I hear you correctly? You need someone to manage the station and keep a loving eye on these adorable tykes?

TANYA                    *bizzare*      J  
Schemer, you are so weird.

Schemer response as  
else

You're bizarre

I thank you > think

in exotic too

STACY  
Just for the day, Schemer. Harry and I have to go to the main office. But-- (trying to be diplomatic)  
--I'm not sure it's the sort of thing you might like--

SCHEMER

A common misconception. You think, "Schemer? The foremost entrepreneurial go-getter of our time? In a baby-sitting-type capacity?" But there's another side to me, Miss Jones.

HARRY

What side would that be, Schemer?

SCHEMER

The love side, Harry. The giving, caring, kissing and hugging side. I would be delighted to run this place and the kids while you're gone. I think...I think I could learn something from the experience. I think we all could.

STACY

I don't know...

SFX: TRAIN WHISTLE

HARRY

(indicating train)  
10:35 express, Stacy. Last train to Clarkville til tonight.

STACY

Well...All right.

SCHEMER

Oh, goody gum drops.

5 ANGLE ON DOOR TO WORKSHOP--STACY AND HARRY hustle out and toward platform, as Schemer and kids trail

STACY (CONT'D)

But promise me you won't do anything strange. Just run the station and help the passengers.

SCHEMER

I am their slave. at their service

STACY

And you must absolutely not leave the station, or leave the kids alone.  
Promise?

SCHEMER

(arms around the kids)  
A herd of wild gnus will not drive me from their side.

STACY

Okay.

(kisses kids)

Kids, have fun. Be good. And Schemer--  
thanks.

SCHEMER

Thank you, Miss Jones.

HE beams and waves farewell as she and Harry leave.

CONDUCTOR (O.S.)  
All aboard!

SFX: TRAIN LEAVING STATION

SCHEMER immediately resumes his normal self. HE crosses to Ticket Booth under--

SCHEMER  
All right. Matt, take down that Schedule Board. Tanya, throw a sheet over that junk in the Lost and Found.

TANYA  
Schemer--!

SCHEMER  
Aha. Here it is.  
(puts on Station Master [hat?])  
Nice fit.

MATT  
Schemer, you can't wear that. It's Aunt Stacy's.

SCHEMER  
(crossing to juke box; inserts coin)  
Not today, hombre. Schemerino's in charge now. Hmm...yes, here's a title that's just right for me.

CUT TO

6 INT. JUKE BOX--THE PUPPETS at their instruments

GRACE  
"Good Morning Mr. Railroad Man"?

TITO  
Nothing wrong with that tune, Grace.

DIDI  
What she means is, Schemer thinks he's such a big shot now.

REX  
Puttin' on a nice hat'll do that to a man, Tex.

TEX  
We oughta know, Rex.

GRACE  
Let's just play.

THEY play. INTERCUT them with KIDS carrying out Schemer's orders. After song ends--

CUT TO

7 MAIN SET--SCHEMER is ready to go out.

SCHEMER

Listen, kids, I have very important business matters to look into. I'll be back in a while. Stay out of trouble.

TANYA

What are we supposed to do? Run the station?

SCHEMER

Nah. Just go out back and dig up some worms to play with. Yeah--that's a nice kid-activity.

HE exits to street.

ANGLE ON INFO BOOTH: MR CONDUCTOR appears

TANYA

Worms!?

MATT

Mr. Conductor, Schemer is breaking all his promises!

TANYA

He said--

MR C

(holding up his hand for calm)  
I know. I've been watching the whole thing. First he's changed things around, and now he's left you both alone.

TANYA

And he told us to go dig worms!

MATT AND TANYA

YUCK!

MR C

Well, now, Schemer is behaving badly. But worms aren't so bad, really.  
(holds out Magic Bubble)  
Take a look at this.

CUT TO

8 ACQUIRED FOOTAGE--"WORM DANCE"

CUT TO

9 MAIN SET--KIDS AND MR C at Info Booth

MATT

Gee, I guess even worms like to have fun.

MR C

In their own, worm-like way, yes.  
(spots Schemer entering)  
Uh-oh...I hate to do this, Matt and  
Tanya/To set this fellow now upon ya/  
But, well, you know/He comes, I go!

HE vanishes. SCHEMER enters

SCHEMER

Hot dog, hot dog...Okay: kids. Your job  
is to get lost til I'm ready for you.

SFX: PHONE RINGS

SCHEMER crosses to Ticket Booth to answer phone, under--

SCHEMER

Go to Harry's office and tinker with  
mechanisms.  
(answers phone)  
Yeah? What? How should I know? I  
never even heard of the place. Listen,  
I'm very busy here. I don't have time  
to talk about trains.

HE hangs up. KIDS are aghast.

TANYA

Schemer, that person wanted information!

SCHEMER

What am I, the Encyclopedia Britannica?  
Just go into Harry's office and stay out  
of the way.

OFF KIDS' reaction--

CUT TO

10 INT. HARRY'S WORKSHOP--THE KIDS shuffle in

finish  
beneath  
form

MATT

I wish Aunt Stacy was back.

TANYA

You know, Schemer says we should trust him. But I don't think we should.

MR C appears

MR C

You don't know the half of it. I just heard what he's up to out there.

MATT

Can't you stop him, Mr. Conductor?

MR C

My magic can do little fun things, Matt. But it takes more than magic to stop someone when they're all excited about a bad idea.

SCHEMER (O.S.)

Okay, guys. Now put that over there--NOT THERE, you dummy! That's for the big one...Right. Good. Perfect.

MR C

It reminds me of when Diesel first met the engines on Sodor. He immediately got off on the wrong foot. Or the wrong wheel, anyway...

HE BLOWS WHISTLE

DISSOLVE TO

11 THOMAS EPISODE #38--"POP GOES THE DIESEL"

DISSOLVE TO

12 HARRY'S WORKSHOP--MR C AND KIDS

MR. C

Mind you, Diesel's a good engine. But he's a little like Schemer. He has his mind more on himself than on anything or anyone around him.

SCHEMER (O.S.)

Okay! Kids! Come on out!

MR. C

Good luck.

HE disappears. MATT and TANYA trade a look--

CUT TO

13 ANGLE ON WORKSHOP DOOR--KIDS emerge from workshop, and react to--

KIDS POV--MAIN SET is filled with health and excercise equipment

RESUME--ANGLE ON SET--KIDS walk numbly into set as SCHEMER beams

SCHEMER

Seriously. Tell the truth. Is this a setup, or what?

TANYA

Schemer, what are you doing with this stuff!?

SCHEMER

Tanya...Matthew...this is what is going to put me on the cover of every business magazine in the country. I am going to turn this silly little so-what station into the most advanced and fabulous health club in the tri-state area. Care for a tour of the facilities?

HE leads them around as they shuffle, in shock.

SCHEMER (CONT'D)

Dead weights...stationary bike... universal muscular dynamizer...bicep toning bars...lateral whatchamacallit tension whatsit--Impressed?  
(off their shell-shocked look)  
Hey, who wouldn't be? Tell you what-- you go call up your friends and invite 'em over for a complimentary workout.  
On me. Hey, you know, I have a friend, too. I think I'll bring him over.

HE jauntily exits. MR C appears on a bike or bench.

MATT

Mr. Conductor, what can we do?

MR C

I don't know, Matt.  
(OFF SFX: TRAIN WHISTLE)  
Uh-oh. Passengers.

[ We need to  
think of  
a way to  
set things right  
S...

ANGLE ON PLATFORM ARCH: STACY, HARRY, AND MR. WALLACE  
(PRES.) appear.

STACY

I think you'll be surprised at what  
we've done here, Mr. Wallace--

ALL stop and react.

STACY (CONT'D)  
What--

MATT

Aunt Stacy! Schemer brought in all this  
stuff!

TANYA

He wants to turn the station into a  
health club!

WALLACE

(sitting on exercycle)  
"Surprised" isn't the word, Miss Jones.  
Are you people mad?

*crazy?*

HE accidentally trips control with his foot or hand--and  
bike starts moving (feet, handlebars) back and forth

STACY

(races forward to stop it)  
Mr. Wallace, it's uh, it's the man who  
runs the Arcade. Schemer. Actually, in  
fact, you're the one who...um...rented  
space to him...Right?

WALLACE gets down, collects himself, under--

WALLACE

Miss Jones, if you wish to operate a  
health club, that is your right. But it  
will not be part of the Indian Valley  
Line. It's one thing to tamper with our  
routing schedule. It is quite another  
to abuse the trust we place in our  
station managers. Good day.

HE storms out to street, nearly colliding with SCHEMER who  
breezes back in.

SCHEMER

Hey, watch it, Chief.

WALLACE

I beg your pardon.

WALLACE goes

SCHEMER

Figures. My cheap friend didn't want to come unless I paid his cab fare. Hey, but so what? Miss Jones, Harry--what can I say, but: Voila!

HARRY

Schemer, I honestly think there's something wrong with you.

SCHEMER

Right again, Har old boy. It's called "genius." Come on--what do you think?

ANGLE ON STACY--SHE collects herself before delivering--

STACY

First, Schemer, I must tell you that it is inexcusable that you left the kids alone here. Especially after you promised not to.

SCHEMER

Okay--guilty as charged. I hereby solemnly swear--

STACY

Don't bother. And as for all...this... That man you called "Chief" happens to be Walter Widgeon Wallace, the ~~president~~ <sup>superintendent</sup> of the entire railroad. He thinks we want to turn this place into a health club. He'll probably...  
(must pull herself together)  
He'll probably fire me--and Harry--and make us all leave. We've probably lost the station.

SCHEMER

(suppressing joy)  
But...do you think they'll keep the station as part of the line?

STACY

(thinking he now regrets everything)  
No, Schemer, I don't. They'll probably just close it down and sell it. Now does that make you happy?

SCHEMER

YOU BET! That means I can go ahead with  
the health club!

(beat--phony concern)

Aw, now, look, don't get me wrong. I'll  
be real sad to see you guys go. We've  
had some excellent times together.

(bright, cheery)

But, that's progress! Can't make an  
omlette without killing a few chickens!

[ ] fucking

HE exits to street, jauntier than ever.

ANGLE ON SET--KIDS sit on Arcade step, STACY and HARRY  
stand at Info Desk. MR C appears on desk

MR C

Maybe you can explain to Mr. Wallace  
about Schemer.

STACY

No. Then he'll say we should have known  
better than to leave the station in his  
hands. And he'd be right.

MATT

Aunt Stacy--does this mean we have to  
leave right now?

STACY

Not yet, Matt. But...

(beat)

And I really tried to make this place  
something special. I wanted to do  
something that my grandmother would have  
been proud of.

HARRY

Well, you did.

OFF her wan smile--

CUT TO

14 INT JUKE BOX--THE PUPPETS are visibly upset

DIDI

Gee--does this mean we have to go, too?

GRACE

Face it. We go where Schemer goes.

*the jukebox  
the arcade*

→

TITO

But he's such a weird cat, man.

REX

Do people in health clubs like railroad songs, Tex?

TEX

I don't think so, Rex.

REX

(beat)

Gosh.

CUT TO

15 RESUME MAIN SET--STACY tries to raise out of the lethargy

STACY

Well, come on, everyone. We can't just mope around forever. Maybe we can move some of this stuff before the next train gets in.

SHE struggles to push one of the machines--it won't budge. SHE turns to MR. C

STACY

Mr. Conductor--?

MR C

I'm sorry, Stacy. They're too big, and too heavy. — *for wages*.

SHE nods, and slowly starts to cry.

STACY

Oh, I'm sorry...I need a tissue...

SHE goes to Info Booth and produces a purse. She opens it--

SFX: Bright, cheery music, e.g., big-band arrangement of "The Continental"

STACY

(rueful smile)

Sorry. Wrong purse.

(beat)

Really wrong.

MR C pulls a handkerchief from his pocket and hands it to her (if possible). As she wipes her eyes...

FADE OUT

*diff. Hanger?*  
*Downbeat?*